



COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING AND TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE MINUTES

The Comprehensive Planning and Transportation Committee convened in a regular meeting on Monday, April 7, 2014 at 301 W. Second Street, Room #1101, Austin, Texas.

Subcommittee Members in Attendance: Mayor Pro Tem Cole (Chair)
Council Member Morrison
Council Member Riley

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Pro Tem Cole called the Comprehensive Planning and Transportation Committee meeting to order at 2:07 p.m.

1. CITIZEN COMMUNICATION

Alix Scarborough work with Reconnect Austin provided a brief follow-up to the February meeting regarding Woodland & I-35. TxDot released updates of two alternatives of Woodland and St. John of which the citizens are very excited about. We still feel the implementation plan still needs a little bit of work that the implementation plan can do a better job of meeting some of its goals. Also, neighborhoods along I-35 are really coming together and speaking up about the plans of what does and does not work.

Laura Pressley talked about the alternative Code approaches and that is what this Council is to vote on, possibly with this Council doing a first reading and the 10/1 doing a second and third reading. The possible code approaches is a big deal and there are three major initiatives feeding into those code approaches. Listening to the Community Report is one of them. The Austin Neighborhood Community (ANC) has never been approached and that concerns me. If our neighborhood hasn't been approached what other stakeholders have not been approached by the Consultants? The Neighborhood Plan Summaries is 126 pages the city staff boiled that down to 145 words. That is a little problematic so we have asked for more time to review that to have an edited process summary. The envision tomorrow simulations, if we use our code today and completely build out to that what does it look like? This will be the deliverable given to you. We are asking you to ask and direct the City Manager to do all three of what was previously mentioned. There is a direct competition for the Windsor Hill Plan and the bottom line is who wins here?

Mayor Pro Tem Cole, asked Ms. Pressley what did you mean by there is a direct competition for the Windsor Hill Neighborhood Plan?

Laura Pressley, stated in her neighborhood plan and future land use map of Windsor Hill states on Cameron and Dessau we have single family three zoning. The growth corridor along Dessau and Cameron calls for high density so which wins, the neighborhood plan or the growth corridor model? Mayor Leffingwell always says the neighborhood plan will win, but the consultants are not being told that, we need your help, give them direction.

David King, thanked the community for their time and stated this committee is one of the most important committees that will be looking at the new Land Development Code. You are all about our future, infrastructure and the long term. We are going to be spending millions on this project and I think it should be done right and good value for what we want. We need to wait and make this right and map in the new zones.

Frank Harren, spoke about small area plans. The small area plan should clearly only control and issue what is specific to the small area. Small area plans must play a subornate role on the community wide issues such as density, transit, affordability, environmental impact and water and energy use. Small area plans must give way to community wide considerations and decisions. It is my belief that Imagine Austin say as much. It says that small areas are for geographical defined area districts such as transit stations, corridors and neighborhoods.

Joyce Basclano, on behalf of the Austin Neighborhood Council, I am asking you to define a resolution insure that the 10/1 Council receives a staff briefing, conducts a public hearing and votes on the final draft of the alternative code approaches.

Mary Ingle, the President of Austin Neighborhood's Council and I have a few concerns about this CodeNEXT process and I am supporting what the other speakers have said. I am hoping this committee will support a resolution to City Manager Marc Ott about the process of the reviewing of the neighborhood plans priorities and goals and the themes need definitions and come back to the people to review to ensure they did get it right. We all want a quality product and if we don't do this in a careful way that quality product will be short cheated. I urge you to consider this.

Mayor Pro Tem Cole, asked Mary when you stated you wanted more of a process what does that look like?

Mary stated, they were asked to submit a review to go over these themes, priorities and goals and give to city staff by April 3rd. Some neighborhood

contact teams were not able to meet that deadline and some were. Even if you were, you submit information so that it can be reviewed by the consultants and brought back to the contingent.

Mayor Pro Tem Cole, asked if they were to embrace that idea, how much time do you think need be added, two weeks or what would be reasonable? There is concern that we are spending over \$1M and we need to get it done in that timeframe or if we are not going to get it done in that timeframe there need to be a good reason why we didn't get it accomplished during that time. Also, how committed are the neighborhoods about returning that information?

Mary stated, we are volunteer's and consultants are paid. I can speak for most neighborhood people we are very determined to give good accurate information, but we do need a good turnaround time. The nature of the project and get people together. Originally, we asked for 90 days, but will compromise for 6 weeks. This will also give the consultants time to review as well.

Mayor Pro Tem Cole, stated even though you are volunteer's you are making a commitment that if we were to decide an additional step of review was needed so that everybody was on the same page, that the members of the neighborhoods would act in good faith and return that information and we would not have a delay because of that.

Mary stated, she is certainly hoping that is the case. This is from speaking and talking to many people about this process.

Council Member Tovo, asked for clarification of the themes Mary was talking about of the terms and the matrix?

Mary stated, the chart/matrix you have to dig deep into the plan and read everything and can't be done with just a word search. There are mistakes on that list and things need to be filled in.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

May 5, 2014 – Approved the April 7, 2014, minutes on a 3-0 vote.

3. UPDATE ON ACCESS TO SHOAL BEACH PARK AND ADJOINING PRIVATE DEVELOPMENT BY MOTORISTS TRAVELING EAST ON CESAR CHAVEZ STREET.

Mr. Fred Evins, Redevelopment Project Manager, Economic Development, discussed the access to Shoal Beach Park within the Seaholm District. The

Seaholm District typically encompasses from Lady Bird Lake north, then from Lamar Boulevard to San Antonio Street.

Specifically, the question that was raised recently is how motorist traveling on Cesar Chavez traveling to the east would have access into the project area? The contemplated final solution when everything is in place, there will continue to be a signalized left turn at Santa Maria, but would have problems during the peak hours for a left turn. The better connection will be at Seaholm Drive where we will have a left turn queuing land and a signalized area that will allow left turns into the Shoal Beach area. Once you are in that area you will have a lot of flexibility and movement within the district. The current challenge is due to the current destruction of not having access to Seaholm Drive or West Avenue. We have been working with the current development to see how soon we can get Seaholm Drive opened for the public at least one lane north bound for the public. An update for this month is that a contractor for street and utilities worker has been selected. Bids were received a few weeks ago and certified last week. Discussion has gone forth to have a partial opening of Seaholm Drive.

Council Member Riley, thanked staff for the update and stated that Seaholm Drive is currently in a construction drive, but what type of timeframe are we talking about?

Mr. Evins stated, we know the whole street has to be done maybe late this summer. We have not been able to start those discussions with J. Reece yet as to what portion of Seaholm we can open.

Council Member Riley, stated so we do expect that both the street and utilities will be ready late this summer?

Mr. Evins stated, yes.

Council Member Riley, asked about West Avenue?

Mr. Evins stated, that will come later, West Avenue will still be impacted by the tower construction which will go on until 2015.

Council Member Riley, asked about the part of Seaholm that is to open in the late summer of 2014. Will it be open all the way from Cesar Chavez to Third Street?

Mr. Evins, stated yes.

Council Member Riley, asked if that would be a two-lane, drop off and pickup and bicycle and pedestrian?

Mr. Evins, stated we are installing great street amenities around the power plant and throughout the district. There will be bike racks, the developers are also working with Austin Bike Share for station location.

Council Member Morrison, asked about the pedestrian mobility during the construction?

Mr. Schatz, stated they have had the conversation regarding the Lance Armstrong bike (LAB) way and the bicycle program. They had indicated they had designed the LAB to the shear roadway set out by Federal Highway administration. So it is a wider facility, but it is a challenge. We would like to have the bicycle and pedestrian through that area, but the challenge is we do not have another parallel path. What will help us is as the Lamar Beach Pathway continues there will be an opportunity to look at how we will provide other parallel connectivity for pedestrian's separate from the LAB. We have some exciting opportunities coming up.

4. UPDATE ON PROCESS TIMELINES FOR CODENEXT, THE CITY'S INITIATIVE TO REVISE THE LAND DEVELOPMENT CODE.

George Adams, Assistant Director, Planning and Development Review, hopefully we can provide responses to a lot of the issues that have been raised, At your March 3rd meeting you asked us to go back and possibly add an additional step to the process, so that after the current Council hopefully makes a decision in October, 2014 that we would add an additional step to bring it back to the new Council after the first of the year. Staff went back discussed and came back with a fairly straight process. We discuss this with the Code Advisory group on March 17, 2014 and they supported the approach.

On this new approach we will start working on developing information on materials for the new Council fairly soon and the memo that was sent to the Council Members provides a list of a number of potential materials of the product, timelines and the scope produced to date. We hope to have this ready for distribution immediately after the election. Then conduct one or more briefings for Council.

Mayor Pro Tem Cole, asked about the briefing of the new Council to weigh in on the process? Is staff saying it is okay for the new Council to vote in some manner on the Alternative Code approaches?

George Adams, stated that Council is welcome to do what they like.

Council Member Morrison, stated that George is talking about that Council take action; work continues then if the new Council decides to re-set or start over that is their prerogative. What I heard from the speakers is they were

suggesting we take first reading only in October and defer second and third readings with the new Council.

Council Member Riley, stated he had not heard a suggestion about first reading and then second and third. This does not strike me as the type of decision that will require three readings. This is not a code amendment we are talking about, but simply a direction.

George stated, staff would conduct one or more briefings to ensure we are all on a solid foundation in terms of where we are in the process and products.

5. BRIEFING ON CODENEXT, LISTENING TO THE COMMUNITY DRAFT REPORT

Dan Prorok, Principal of Opticos Design Inc., Lead Consultants for the CodeNEXT process. We have done this Land Developing Coding all across the country and this is by far the most extensive process we have done. I applaud the City and Council for making this a priority. In the next couple of months we will be releasing deliverables and character manuals.

Sebastian Puente, Principal President of Cultural Strategies, this report outlines CodeNEXT Listening & Understanding. There are three parts to the report: the events and different ways people participated, addendum which includes interviews and links to on-line input and online access to a broad array of input from the community, organizations and the City Department input.

There are thousands of comments that were heard and about 800 participants in the process. Comments were analyzed using a key word identification approach, method identified patterns to identify the main issues, or themes, most frequently mentioned themes are listed, participant's comments were categorized under the themes that best represented their ideas and themes may not be fully representative of all the key issues or points of view of the community at large.

Mark Yznaga, stated the process they went through was very long and we received thousands of comments from both small group meetings and special events. After going through the themes we came up with the different categories of what we were hearing. In the summary of the themes most were physical issues such as transportation, code, neighborhood characteristics or affordability. What I really like about where I live or what I don't like.

Council Member Morrison, asked about the neighborhood characteristics of what was more physical and not social, but on the other hand Code could actually enhance some of those social values?

Mark, stated yes.

Sebastian, stated one of the designs to think about is how do we meet people where they are at? During these meetings we open the conversation with have you had experience dealing with the Land Development Code, why are you interested in the Land Development Code revision, what questions do you have about the code and the revision process. We wanted the average person to look at this and be able to associate with it.

We had in depth interviews with people across the cities or surveys that people completed. Also, case studies opportunities and listening sessions. The report addendum and online resources is intended to help foster comments and to see where others may have comments.

Council Member Morrison, asked about Listening to the Community, what came out of it that surprised you?

Mark, stated they did something new not just for in depth to the responses, but also we made sure that everyone say each other's responses. The walk ability and transportation was very strong responses from the people of Austin. People love their neighborhoods and want them to be green, they want a family friendly place.

Dan, stated what surprised him the most when coming into processes like this the geographical character or the physical characteristics of different types of neighborhoods or place. No matter the location it seemed that people wanted these choices at the different diverse places.

Council Member Morrison, stated she really didn't understand the two different tools for the new zoning code. Write the zoning code that is the tools and then you decide what kind and then you do the mapping. Can you talk about tools that you build?

Dan, stated that as the Community Character is delivered in the next four to six weeks it will become clearer, but we are using that process to asset more physical patterns of each of the different types of places.

Council Member Morrison, asked about the lack of trust and really need to build more productive working relationships and feel those are the hot button issues. It is really about where certain things are going to be and is there a way to capture those hot button issues and how we going to address them?

Dan, agrees with the need to understand the difference between the two processes. The Code Diagnosis will be released in early May, using that process to define these major issues and integrate those processes.

Council Member Morrison, asked who is going to handle the mapping what is the concept?

George Zapalac, stated what we have envisioned is to take some selected neighborhoods and do some testing and see what it would look like on the map as a test run of the ordinance.

Dan, stated on the Neighborhood Plan Summary it was never the intent of that process to have a in detail overview of every neighborhood plan. What we needed to do was that we do understand the importance of the neighborhood plans and a lot of time and energy put into those plans. What we needed to do was think about the process of the different types of places of the existing zoning code, has the current code been effective in implementing the plans or is there a more effective way to do it. What are consistent items that come up in these themes of the plans?

George Adams, stated that part of the challenge we abstracted all of the goals from all of the adopted neighborhood plans. The level of details varies from those plans, roughly a 15 year period where there has been a lot of change in the process. The idea of the themes is to relatively look at the priorities of the goals.

Council Member Morrison, asked Dan about the comment that Mary Ingle made about mixed use light. How would that affect?

Dan, stated that when the Code Diagnosis comes out there will be clarity. Part of this process will clarify what mixed use is. We need to be more clear what that means and where the mix use needs to be.

Mayor Pro Tem Cole, asked Dan about the product they plan to come back with at the end of May and hope it sheds some clarity? Please explain what that would be?

Dan, stated it would be the Code Diagnosis.

Mayor Pro Tem Cole, stated there is concern about not taking a good look at the neighborhood plans and do you have any comment?

Dan, stated yes, we knew even at the point when we were submitting our qualifications for this project about two years ago. Understanding that bridge between the neighborhood plan and the land development code was a very important part.

Mayor Pro Tem Cole, asked what types of processes can we put into place to elevate those terms? Maybe, putting together some focus groups to get an

idea of what the neighborhood plan says and what the land development code ultimately says and what is the bottom line to help with those fears?

Dan, stated those could be some of the scenarios that are modeled to show the benefits or the results. There are options that we can discuss.

Council Member Morrison, asked knowing the many concerns about how the neighborhoods would be mapped, is there any way we could acknowledge those concerns now?

Mark, stated we agree and have been looking forward to having a more focus discussion all along.

Mayor Pro Tem Cole, summed up the next steps; George Adams will make a list of the hot button issues, we will ask the Austin Neighborhood Council to come up with a list of no more than five of a potential pilot neighborhoods for them to consider and ask the consultants to look at Cincinnati and how they would take those five neighborhoods through the process and if that could be included in the existing scope of work we have now.

ADJOURMENT

Mayor Pro Tem Cole adjourned the meeting with no objection at 4:03 p.m.